THE REVOLUTION WAS TELEVISED
THE DEFINITIVE ORAL HISTORY OF
THE BOYS

WHAT IF THE PEOPLE MEANT TO
PROTECT YOU WERE ACTUALLY THE ONES
DESTROYING EVERYTHING?

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SUPERPOWER
MEETS ABSOLUTE CORRUPTION?

CAN A GIANT SPERM WHALE
REALLY BE USED AS A WEAPON?

"In reality, everybody is the hero of their own stories. So, I don't need, or want, the audience to empathize with my characters. But I want them to understand them."

Eric Kripke

WELCOME TO THE BOYS,

the wildly sublime, subversive and sharp superhero satire from Amazon MGM Studios that dares to hold a funhouse mirror to our society. The purported good guys are the real villains...and the only thing standing in the way of their global domination is a motley crew of vigilantes fighting with nothing to lose.

Based on the *New York Times* best-selling comic of the same name from Garth Ennis and Darick Robertson, *The Boys* was developed by Eric Kripke and produced by Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg in association with Sony Pictures Television. The series premiered in 2019. Right from the jump (or, rather, a fatal high-speed run), the trio underlined that nobody here was nobly fighting for truth, justice and a better tomorrow. Instead, this was a deeply complex look at morally compromised individuals influenced by corporate greed — and how putting them on a celebrity pedestal can lead to damning consequences.

And yet, superheroes Homelander (Antony Starr), the Deep (Chace Crawford) and Black Noir (Nathan Mitchell), part of the original collective known as The Seven, truly believe in their hearts that they are the "good guys" saving the world. So does Billy Butcher (Karl Urban), who manipulates his titular team of ragtag antiheroes (Jack Quaid as Hughie, Laz Alonso as Mother's Milk, Tomer Capone as Frenchie and Karen Fukuhara as Kimiko) into using brutal and clever tactics to take down the supes.

"The truth is that very few people wake up and say, 'I'm going to do evil today,'" Kripke says. "In reality, everybody is the hero of their own stories. So, I don't need, or want, the audience to empathize with my characters. But I want them to understand them."

The biting (and often prophetic) social commentary is bolstered by a distinctive flavor and vision. Each of its 40 meticulously crafted episodes is capable of delivering inspired original songs, satirical humor, dazzling effects, state-of-the-art stunt work and explosive, story-driven violence — punctuated by an iconic Season 3 scene involving a certain exploding body part. As a result, *The Boys* has so far garnered four Emmy wins and 12 nominations, including one for Outstanding Drama Series in 2021.

In triumphantly parodying the traditional superhero genre, *The Boys* has also launched a cinematic universe all of its own that includes the spinoff *Gen V* (which premiered in 2023) and an upcoming prequel with showrunner Paul Grellong, *Vought Rising*. But now it's time for *The Boys* to reach its epic conclusion. To honor the irreverent and subversive saga's fifth and final season (now streaming on Prime Video), here's a wide-ranging retrospective tribute courtesy of the cast members, behind-the-scenes talent and more.

The Boys is based on The New York Times best-selling comic by Garth Ennis and Darick Robertson, who also serve as executive producers, and developed by executive producer and showrunner Eric Kripke. Seth Rogen, Evan Goldberg, James Weaver, Neal H. Moritz, Pavun Shetty, Phil Sgriccia, Michaela Starr, Paul Grellong, David Reed, Judalina Neira, Jessica Chou, Gabriel Garcia, Ori Marmur, Ken F. Levin and Jason Netter also serve as executive producers. The Boys is produced by Sony Pictures Television, Amazon MGM Studios with Kripke Enterprises, Original Film and Point Grey Pictures.

"*The Boys* was something that Seth and I were obsessed with from the day the first issue came out."

Evan Goldberg

SUPER

Eric Kripke *(showrunner, executive producer)* My involvement with *The Boys* started around 2014, 2015. The way it happened was that I read that Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg were making *Preacher* for TV. I'm the biggest *Preacher* fan. I'm a big comic book nerd, and Garth Ennis is my favorite comic book writer. I knew one of the executive producers, Ori Marmur (Original Film), and asked to meet with him. So, I sat down and said, "Oh, I just wanted to say fuck you for giving *Preacher* to someone else." And he said, "Well, we have *The Boys*. Do you want that?" I'm like, "Oh yeah, totally."

Evan Goldberg *(executive producer)* *The Boys* was something that Seth and I were obsessed with from the day the first issue came out. If memory serves, many other people were given the chance to get their hands around it. We were told that Eric Kripke was highly interested in *The Boys* as well. So, we agreed to meet with him and probably make the project, even though we didn't know him at all.

Kripke They were snacking from a big Costco bag of tortilla chips.

Goldberg A bag of nachos is a good idea!

Kripke It's a great idea.

DNA

Goldberg So, we met and talked about it a bunch. Then we were off.

Kripke We took it around town, and hilariously, got a lot of passes from people who, to this day, come up to me and say that they can't believe it. We wrote a first draft for Cinemax, but then they didn't have the budget for it. So, we took it out again, this time with a finished script. And right at the same time, Amazon was getting a genre department up and running.

Goldberg We wanted to make sure that Garth was happy when we did *Preacher*. So, when we got to *The Boys*, he was more inclined to trust us completely and just go with it.

Kripke Even through Season 5, I'd still send Garth every single script, and he would come back with [notes on] Butcher's dialogue.

Judalina Neira (*writer, executive producer*) There are a lot of superhero shows out there. I have worked on them. The great thing about *The Boys* is that it found a way to subvert superhero fatigue.

Kripke When I started writing *The Boys*, the thing I found most compelling was just the notion of, if you were to actually put superheroes in the real world, what a flaming shit show it would be. It's a horrible idea to give regular humans that level of power. And I was just really interested in it, if you did the most realistic version of a superhero show possible.

Paul Grellong *(writer, executive producer)* I had heard about what Eric was cooking up with *The Boys*, and I was excited about it. But when it hit, when it came out, it was such a welcome breath of fresh air. I thought it was an incredible canvas to be able to paint stories about this country by saying, "If a city block was to get destroyed, what would really happen? What's the real body count?" And the violence on *The Boys* — and frankly, all the shows in the VCU — it's not theoretical, it's real. What would really happen, honestly? That's the question that gets asked the most in the writers' room: "Okay, but what's the real version of that?"

Ellie Monahan *(writer, supervising producer)* I started as the writers' assistant in the spring of 2017. I'm not really a superhero person, but I read the pilot and some of the comics and thought it was really interesting. It was a really small writers' room — the pilot was already written, but we tinkered with it a bit and made a [show] bible. We got the official pickup in September of that year.

Jessica Chou *(writer, executive producer)* I'm a big fan of genre in general, because I think genre is the best platform to talk about social issues.

Geoff Aull *(writer)* I started in early January of 2018. I had heard about the project and had seen a press release about it. The idea of satirizing superheroes with the purpose of commentary was very intriguing. I read the first two episodes and was so impressed.

Kripke At the start of each season, the writers and I would take six whole weeks and just talk about it. What are the thematics? What do we want to do in the story that we haven't done before? What's most illuminating for

these characters? The mantra was, "Don't go bigger, go deeper."

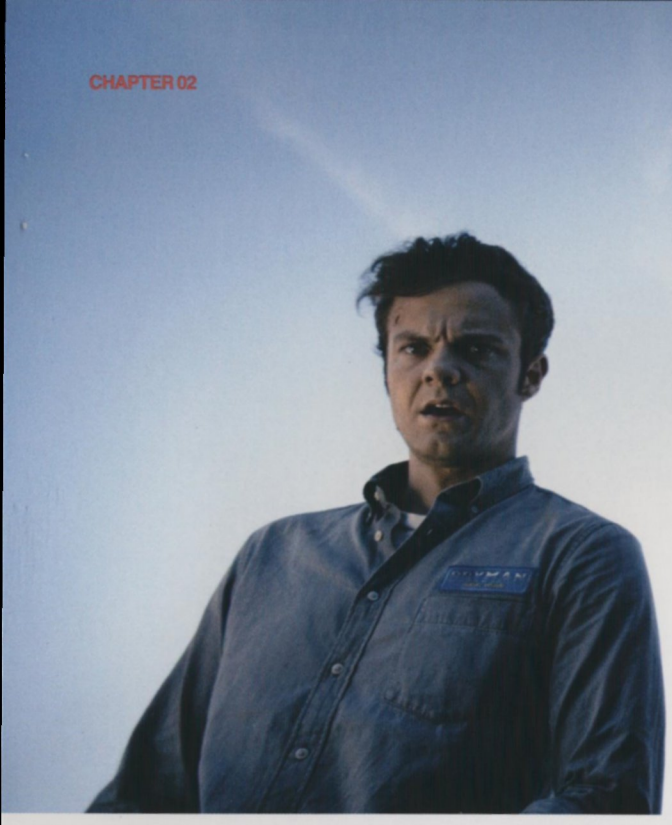
Chace Crawford *(actor, The Deep)* What's great about our show is that they've never shied away from these real topics. But the best thing about it is the satire.

Chou There's a common misconception in our hero-worship culture, which is that heroism, if we have the right tools, is easy. But what we've tried to show in the series is that heroism is often just a small act. I always loved Homelander, because he's 1,000% the hero of his story and doesn't see himself as a villain. He's going to do unhinged shit, but for him, it's completely reasonable and valid. That's how you approach that character.

Antony Starr *(actor, Homelander)* I'm a boots-on-the ground guy. I show up and do my job with that respect. But I think what people connect to is the humanity. As much as Homelander wants to be a god trying to be better, he really loves this kid Ryan, played by Cameron Crovetti. He lacks the skill set to give the kid what he needs, and that's what people relate to. That's why the character is compelling and confusing for people.

"WHEN I STARTED WRITING *THE BOYS*, THE THING I FOUND MOST COMPELLING WAS JUST THE NOTION OF, IF YOU WERE TO ACTUALLY PUT SUPERHEROES IN THE REAL WORLD, WHAT A FLAMING SHIT SHOW IT WOULD BE."

Eric Kripke



"THE SHOW IS ABOUT MANY THINGS, AND IT SPEAKS ON A MULTITUDE OF LEVELS. IT HOLDS A MIRROR UP TO SOCIETY AND GOES, *IS THIS YOU?*"

Karl Urban

Jessie T. Usher *(actor, A-Train)* There's always a character you can relate to and make you think, "Oh wow, is that how people perceive me?"

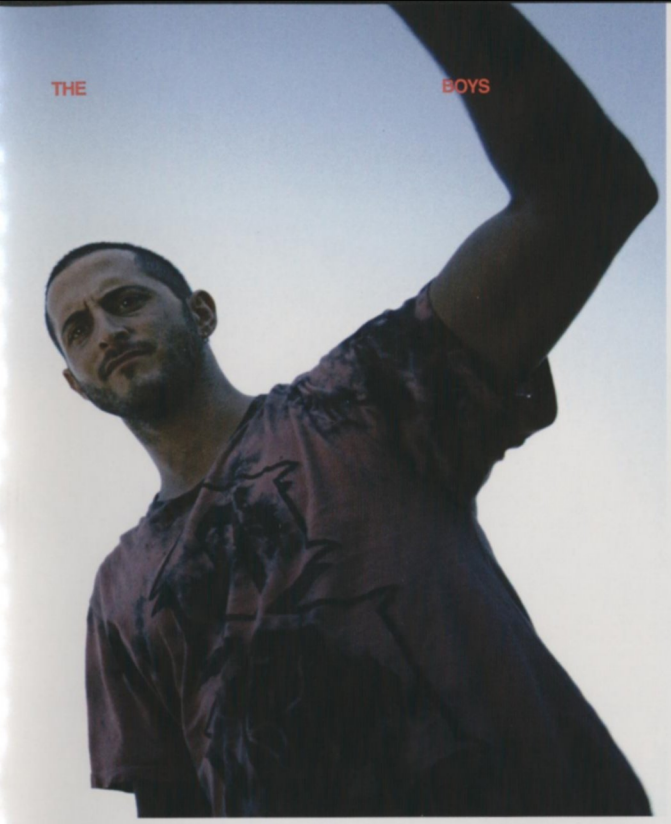
Monahan One of the rules and guiding principles was that we always had to stay grounded in the character. The only magical thing about this world is this thing Compound V, which manifests people in all sorts of crazy ways.

Anslem Richardson *(writer, co-executive producer)* The gross shit always came out of the story that we were developing for that particular episode. We don't just throw dicks around. That's not us. But Eric had said that these were just regular people with issues.

Tomer Capone *(actor, Frenchie)* Are we dramatic? I mean, yeah. Are we action-packed? Come on. Horror gore. So many things about this show are turning TV upside down and bringing something new, without hesitation.

Jack Quaid *(actor, Hughie Campbell)* We do have moments that are insane. But that's a tool to draw you in. Sometimes you don't necessarily know there is a message beneath it all.

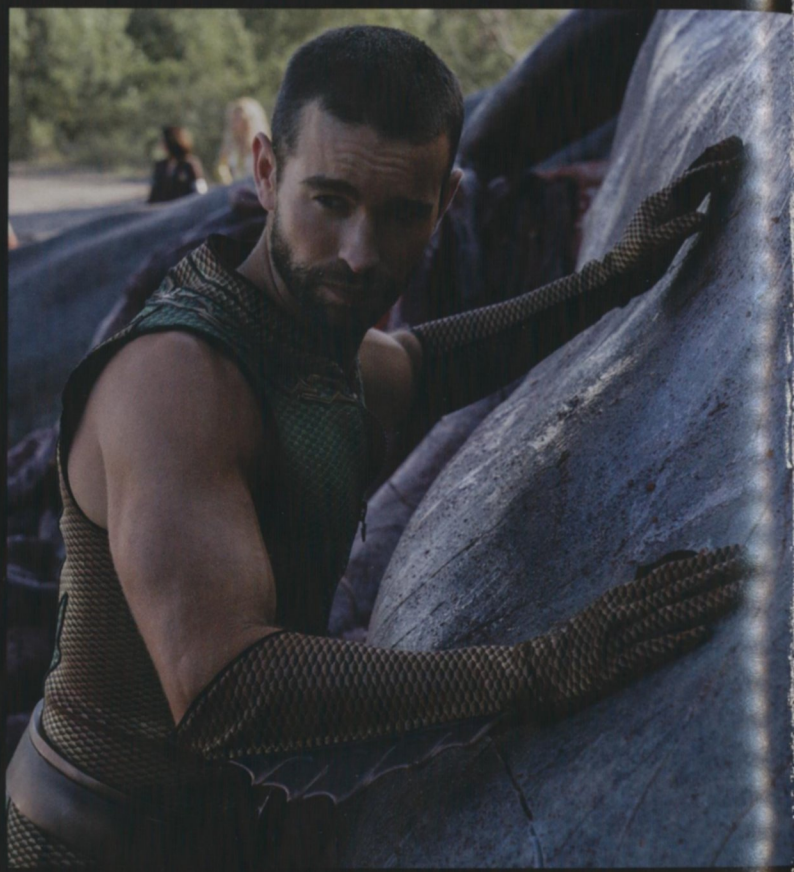
Karl Urban *(actor, Billy Butcher)* I wouldn't tell you what the show is about because I feel like it's a mistake for any artist to define his or her art. In doing so, you deny the audience the right of interpretation. The show is about many things, and it speaks on a multitude of levels. It holds a mirror up to society and goes, "Is this you?"



Erin Moriarty *(actor, Annie January/Starlight)* We refuse to be complacent. We need to be able to deal with things in our society directly, in a really topical way. The writers have done a brilliant job to make the storylines cathartic for us and for the audiences that watch it.

Kripke The show has gotten crazier because the world has gotten crazier. The show has tried to reflect that.

Goldberg But no matter how crazy the show gets, it feels like it's happening on the same planet I live on. It's the real world, so people care more. To see someone's heart break and someone else fuck an octopus they're in love with is the greatest balancing act ever.



A DEEP

Kripke Look, any casting is difficult; finding 12 leads was really, really difficult. We also had to start with the superheroes, because it was going to take six to eight months to make their supersuits. It was a little bit of a leap of faith hoping that the good guys and the bad guys were going to have that right tension.

Goldberg I've now spent a good chunk of time with Antony Starr, and he's still somewhat of an enigma to me. He's very scary as Homelander.

Kripke I first saw Ant on a tape that he sent in. It was the worst possible quality. He recorded it in his trailer in the desert. The lighting and sound were horrible. But I was fascinated by him. He's obviously very handsome and has that square-jawed American thing even though he's from New Zealand.

Urban I was at home in New Zealand. I think the first point of awareness was reading about my friend Antony Starr getting cast in his role. I was immediately intrigued. I thought it sounded cool. I thought I'd really love to be a part of that. Coincidentally, a week later, I got a call from my agent saying that they were sending me the script.

Kripke Karl Urban was the first name we talked about as Butcher. We looked at a lot of guys, but nobody ever beat him.

Urban Once I met Eric, I had a good sense that he was a man I was willing to go on a five-to-seven-year journey with. So, I didn't hesitate and signed on. I was excited because it represented an opportunity to do a very subversive bit of counter-programming for the past 20 years.

Crawford I had done a teenage soap show, which was popular. I was moving into my early 30s and really wanted to shed that 20s heartthrob thing. So, when I got the character breakdown in my inbox from Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg and Amazon, I was like, "Is this for real?"

Quaid There was a script emailed to me. I read it and was blown away. I didn't know initially that it was based on a comic book. I thought someone had just written an incredible script about present-day America and inserted superheroes in it.

BENCH

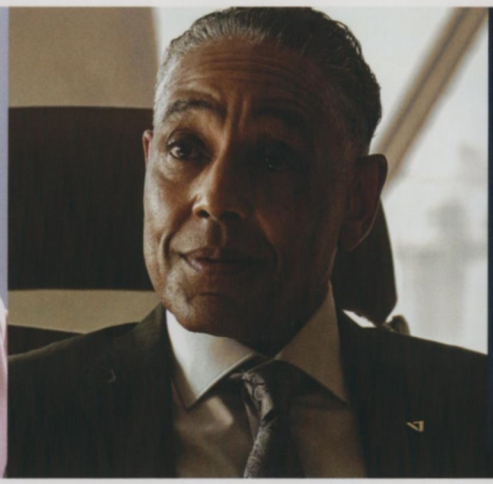
Laz Alonso *(actor, Mother's Milk)* The project came to me like any other audition. At the time, I was not really open to taking on roles that were shows that I personally wouldn't watch. It was the first time in my career where I said, "I'm turning down anything that comes my way, that I wouldn't be excited to watch."

Colby Minifie *(actress, Ashley Barrett)* I auditioned with a tape. I didn't hear anything for five months. Then the notes for my callback were, "Be more grounded." So, I retaped it. About three days later, I was on a plane.

Karen Fukuhara *(actress, Kimiko Miyashiro)* I got an email from my reps and got the sides for the audition. I think it was the scene where Frenchie and Kimiko are negotiating. She's shackled in a cage. Like, okay, she's caged up, she's silent and she's not in the pilot. Like, did I even want to do this? But I loved Seth's movies, and I thought the pilot was hilarious.

Moriarty I remember distinctly that it was around Thanksgiving time. I put myself on tape, and then I said to my team, "This script is brilliant. I know it's going to be a cattle call. I know I didn't get it. But can we just ask for feedback?" I just cared about the character so much.

Cameron Crovetti *(actor, Ryan Butcher)* My mom put me on a tape. It was the scene where I was getting pushed off the roof. I thought this project was so weird. But I knew there was a superhero aspect to it. I was 11 at the time, and like all kids, I wanted to have powers. So, I was super excited about it.

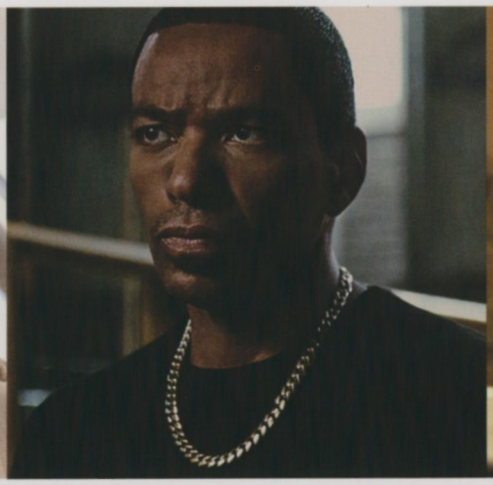
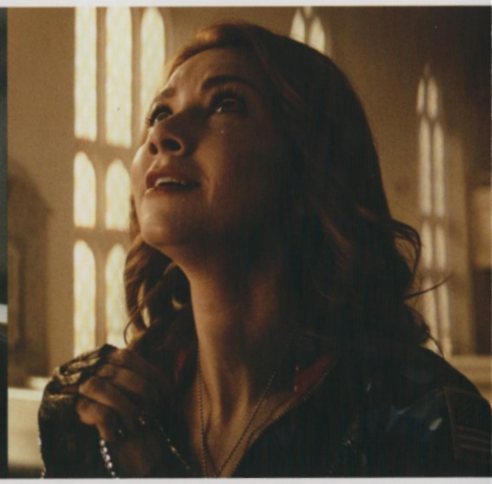


Usher I was asked to read for The Deep and for A-Train. My parents said to me, "A-Train is more like you." I recorded a tape and wanted to redo it the next day, but it was too late. I just thought it sucked. Eric called me and said "It's almost like you're disgusted. You have this attitude." So that's where they built the character from. It's funny how things work out.

Alonso I never did get the whole script, just the sides. But in his first scene, the character is a counselor at a home for troubled teens. That instantly resonated with me, and I knew that I could bring a level of authenticity and lived-in experience that no other actor could do. So, when I walked into the audition room, that's who showed up.

Capone I almost died during my audition. Long story short, it was the scene where Frenchie is pulling the trunk and we see Translucent there, and Frenchie goes wild on him and pulls out a gun. I shot the scene with a prop gun outside. I guess a neighbor saw me with a gun and called the cops. They came in with guns drawn. Then they saw me and recognized me from another show. I swear to God, the person who did the audition with me peed her pants. I remember thinking, "If I'm not going to book this show, what show am I going to book?!"

Susan Heyward *(actor, Sista Sage)* Whether Eric thinks that or not, which he probably does, he still sets an atmosphere where we can bring all of our ideas. And he's able to sift through them all, take what he feels serves the story best and run with it. And so, to be included in the creation process, not only the interpretation process, is something that I've always wanted.

Moriarty I went through a pretty grueling testing period. Eric had me try out each scene in so many different ways. But I knew I did my best, and that's all you can ask for.

Kripke When Erin walked in, I was like, "There's Starlight."

Moriarty I ended up being the first one cast.

Goldberg To me, the biggest, most exciting surprise was Jack Quaid. I was not familiar with him. But his reaction [to his girlfriend's death] was absolutely everything. If he didn't nail that, the whole thing wouldn't work.

Quaid I had a pretty lengthy audition process. I had a chemistry read with Erin, then I tested with Eric and Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg in the room. I wanted it so bad. It just seemed so cool. And I'm a nerd. I love superhero stuff.

Crawford I went in to audition and there were, like, 50 people in front of me. I knew they were going to be seeing people all day and be exhausted. They weren't going to remember me. So, I went in, and Kripke was in the room. I think a reason why the show is cast so well is because he knew exactly what he wanted. He was in there personally doing the work.

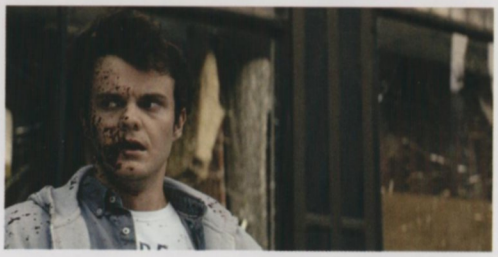
Fukuhara Kripke was there during my audition, and there was a real actor playing opposite me. So, it was very easy to get into character instead of, like, talking to a wall.

Alonso I improvised the dialogue, and I had Kripke cracking up. The more he laughed, the more I improvised.

Quaid I will never forget that I was driving when the call came in. I pulled over just to scream.

Crawford I got the call around Christmastime, and it was the best present. I had a feeling that what we could do with the show was really unique and original.

Minifie The cast is so good. Everybody shows up 100% of the time, super prepared, ready to give it their all.



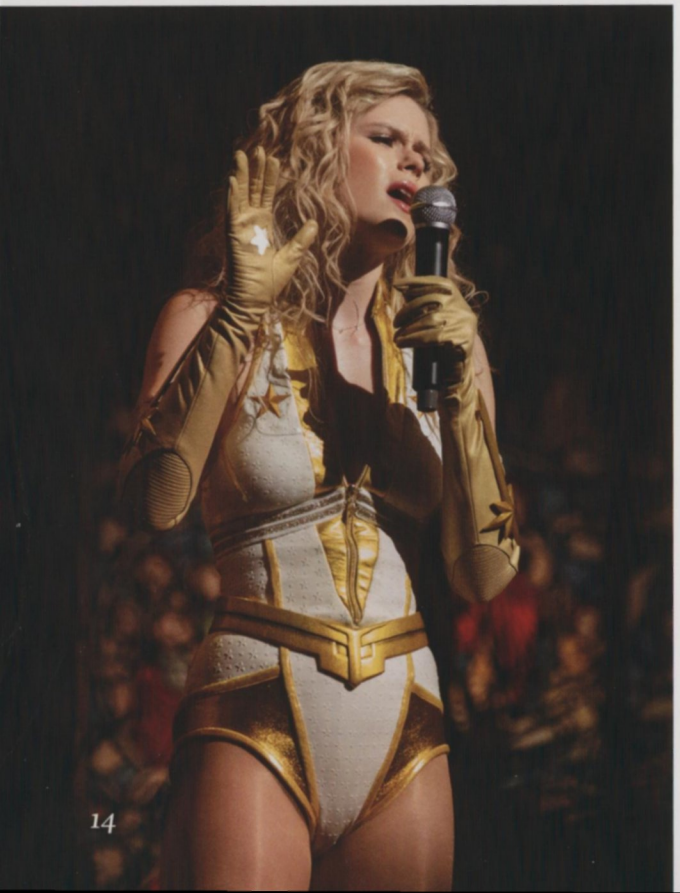
"THIS INCREDIBLY DEEP BENCH OF SMART, PASSIONATE AND BRILLIANT ACTORS IS UNHEARD OF"

Eric Kripke

Urban I don't think the show would have worked had you cast other actors in it. It may have. Maybe it's egotistical of me to say, but honestly, if anyone else was to play Homelander, I don't think it would have worked, because what Ant does is incredible. The same with what Jack does with Hughie, or what Erin and Laz and Tomer and Karen do with their characters.

Kripke In any cast, you're lucky if you find one brilliant actor. You're insanely lucky if you find two. But to end up with 12 out of 12 and just have this incredibly deep bench of smart, passionate and brilliant actors is unheard of.

MUSICAL CHAMELEON



Kripke Chris Lennertz is the composer. We went to USC [University of Southern California] together. We were actually fraternity brothers, so we've been friends for over 30 years. I hire him every chance I get, and he wrote the music for this series. Not just the score, but every time you hear one of our parody songs, he wrote it. He wrote the music, he wrote the lyrics, he orchestrated it. He writes every piece of original music.

Christopher Lennertz *(composer)* In Season 1, there was a big juxtaposition between what we would consider propaganda music, which also is what you'd consider superhero music. It was what Vought and their superheroes thought they were. And then there were The Boys, our real heroes, which was very rag-tag music made by broken instruments, broken amps playing real sloppily, so things aren't even in tune. But then, as we got through Season 3, all of a sudden we've got Butcher and Hughie taking Temp V. And now you've also got some of the heroes from The Seven on our side. Everything gets mish-mashed. We've been running toward this meeting point, which I think

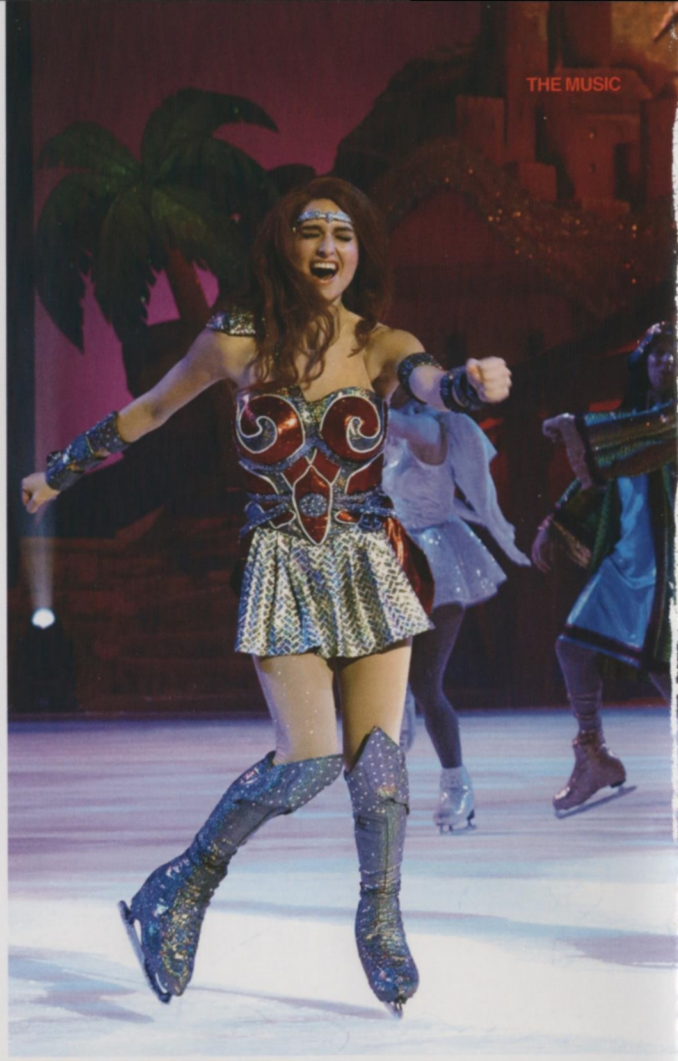
is Season 5, where all bets are off. We're going toward this conclusion of pure catastrophe and insanity and that's *The Boys*.

Kripke I have this secret, stealth love of musicals, and specifically, funny movie musicals. To me, *The Blues Brothers* is an incredible movie, or the *South Park* movie, which is incredible. Those things really have made an impact on me. So, the opportunity to do it was just so fun. Starting in Season 2, Amazon would come and want us to make music videos, and it just kept becoming more and more fun as we did it.

Lennertz "Let's Put the Christ Back in Christmas" is definitely my favorite song. I love them all, I really do, but that one was perfect because it was such an over-the-top production that led up to this massacre by Homelander. As we normally do on *The Boys*, there's no wink. We're not letting the audience know we're joking. We play it as if the head of marketing at Vought thought that this was the greatest idea in the world. It's always done that way, and there's no half-waying it. We always go all in with the joke. To be able to write this Christmas song, with three giant Tony or Grammy winners in James Monroe Iglehart, Shoshana Bean and Andrew Rannells singing it, and then have all that happening while ice skaters are skating around and including a donkey... It was so insane, and that's what I love about *The Boys*. It's pure insanity.

Kripke I also feel like the superheroes in the show represent all facets of pop culture. They're not just superheroes. They're actors, they're singers, they're pitch men and women, they're politicians, they're athletes, and so it was important for them to be singers, too, because popular music is such an important part of everybody's life. So, it's pretty natural in the realm of this world that A-Train would basically have a version of Will Smith's career, where he'd be in big VFX movies, but also rap as well.

Alonso Jessie [T. Usher, who plays A-Train] had a real song. Like, a real song!



Gabriel Garcia *(executive producer)* In-world songs, TikToks, YouTube videos, I think have helped define the show and keep it feeling current.

Lennertz I treat it as if Eric's not telling me what to do, but Vought is telling me what to do. And it's always coming from the approach of, "What would that giant corporation do, and what would they expect from their hero?" Whether it's Jessie and making [A-Train] look super cool or it's the boy band stuff in Season 3, where it's like if you took NSYNC and Backstreet Boys and mashed that together and then shined it up with a huge boardroom filled with PR executives who don't actually know what's cool, but they're thinking they might. That's how we create this stuff. It's like method acting but with songs. I think that makes it successful.

Kripke What really blew me away, because we didn't do it on our previous shows, is Chris' ability to be a chameleon and write brilliant, hilarious songs in such wildly different genres is incredible to me. He writes this Whitney Houston barn burner with "You Never Truly Vanish," and then he'll turn right around and write boy band songs. And then he'll write the

Emmy-winning "Let's Put the Christ Back in Christmas" and the A-Train rap. Everything is just so good and so absolutely different from the next thing he'll write. His chameleon-like ability to perform in every single genre is incredible.

Garcia Probably one of my favorite Christopher Lennertz music moments is "Chimps Don't Cry." It's so funny. We got to shoot the entire music video for it. I thought it was kind of amazing.

Lennertz I think the other thing that makes it successful is that Eric works it into the story so much. It's integral to a major plot point, whether it's Translucent dying or Crimson Countess singing in Voughtland to the memory of Soldier Boy. It's part of this very committed line in the sand. Plant your foot and commit 100% to the gag, and then do it as seriously as you can. There's no campiness to it. It can be cheesy, but it's 100% done with serious commitment, and I think that's the thing that makes *The Boys* songs all work, and that's what gives *The Boys* the humor it does, which is what makes it, I think, one of the best shows on television.

Kripke His song this year, "Raise Him Up," celebrates Homelander and is done as sort of this James Brown kind of power soul song, sung by Daveed Diggs. I think it's his best song. I think he saved the best for last.

"I THINK IT'S HIS BEST SONG. I THINK HE SAVED THE BEST FOR LAST."

Eric Kripke

"He has been one of the most important people on our set for so many reasons."

Erin Moriarty

FREEDOM

Kripke An unbelievable amount of work goes into every single fight, which starts literally months ahead of shooting. A lot of stunt coordinators do this, but they've never been at the elaborate level that I've seen John Koyama do it, which is he'll basically direct and shoot, with his team, a version of the fight, and then he'll show it to me and the director. We'll give notes, and then he'll do a couple passes until he gets a pretty solid version of what that fight is going to look like. And then he has to train the actors in every single move, and it's every bit as elaborately choreographed as a dance.

Moriarty One of my favorite humans, John Koyama, is brilliant. He's our stunt director, our stunt coordinator. He has been one of the most important people on our set for so many reasons.

Urban It starts with Eric Kripke and his team writing the beats. Then, John's got to come up with, physically, how we execute it. We are so blessed to have John on the team. He has won Emmys for his work on the show. As an actor, it gives you a huge sense of security and trust. It really is a case of, "Okay, tell me what to do, and I will do it." John has built an incredible team of professional stuntmen and women around him who are there to support us, who are there

to take the knocks and the blows and the stuff that's too dangerous for us to do.

Fukuhara John Koyama — the man, the legend. I love him so much. As a human being, and also as a stunt coordinator, he is just a gift. He is the most badass human that I've ever gotten the pleasure to know. But he's also the kindest human being.

John Koyama *(supervising stunt coordinator/second unit director)* [I worked on] Seasons 3, 4 and 5. It's weird, because now, looking back, it feels like it went by so fast. But during it, it feels like we've been doing it for 10 years, because we do so much stuff together, and it's been amazing with this ensemble cast. All of them do action. All of them do stunts. They're all incredible to work with.

Kripke I think what's so great about John is, a lot of stunt coordinators will say, "What kind of stunts do you want?" John is the only one who's asked me, "What's this scene about? What are you trying to say with this fight scene?" I'll say, "Oh, well, I'm glad you asked. It's about Butcher's desperation and not feeling as powerful against this superhero as he wants to be." And he'll put these story beats in the fight. For him, the fight is just another way to tell the story.

TO CREATE

Koyama Karen Fukuhara is insanely physically talented and an incredible actress and sweet as pie. We get to do so many things with her because she's trained in fighting. She's trained in martial arts. She's super athletic. She can jump on wires as well as a lot of stunt people, so you know the freedom is there for us to create with her.

Fukuhara I feel very lucky that my character got to do so many stunts over the years. I've got to do so much wire work. I've done special kinds of martial arts, like [the Filipino martial art] Kali with the dildo fight. That was all practice with Kali sticks. And we went through weeks and weeks of training. I'd like to think that it built Kimiko's character, in a very natural way, because of the hours that I spent being her in rehearsal in those stunt rehearsals. And, I got to pick my stunt double, Kiralee [Hayashi]'s, brain about how we could do it so that it looked more animalistic.

Alonso John has just been a godsend as far as not just creating choreography that's beautiful and feels real when you watch it, but also allowing us to bring our characters to life and input different character moments within the choreography as well. It's been creatively so rewarding working with him.

Koyama What I dig about this show is there's a lot of firsts all the time. [In the "Herogasm" episode] you have Soldier Boy coming in to fight for the first time, and then you have Butcher, and Homelander doesn't know [Butcher has powers], and is asking "What have you done!?" after he lasers him out of nowhere. *And* you have Hughie, who teleports, but then is naked. All these firsts! Eric Kripke and I and the writers — and the actors as well — we have to write down, "Where's Homelander in this? Is he the apex? Where's Soldier Boy? Where's Butcher?"

Fukuhara He's not just a good person; he's also the hardest-working man in Hollywood. I think he sleeps about four hours a day. True fact. He doesn't sleep. He's always thinking about how we're going to work this stunt out and how we're going to make it safe and what will make it look more dynamic.

Urban We train for weeks and weeks, and then it's a combination of working and figuring out, "Okay, what shots do you need? So, it's myself and Antony Starr in what shots? Or is it me and Antony's double?" And it's thinking about the safest and most sensible way to execute this vision. That's what John does so very, very well.

Moriarty Who he is as a human leads to him being such a perfect stunt coordinator, because you're putting your lives into these people's hands when you perform stunts.

Kripke He has to make sure that they're all doing it safely, because the single most important part is that no one gets injured. It's just a TV show, and it's not worth anyone getting hurt over.

Koyoma I come from the feature world, where we have so much time, and [on *The Boys*], it's like we're doing features on TV time. That's been incredibly challenging but so rewarding at the same time. It's been the best time of my career for sure. Being able to create the things we've created and being this proud of what we've done... The accolades are the accolades, and we're proud of the fact that we've won Emmys and we've won other awards for what we've done. But really what it comes down to is the journey, the experience and the people.

"HE'S NOT JUST A GOOD PERSON; HE'S ALSO THE HARDEST-WORKING MAN IN HOLLYWOOD"

Karen Fukuhara

ICONIC DESIGN

Kripke One of my very first comments to Amazon when they picked up the show was, "If we don't have supersuits that are every bit as elaborate and professional and slick as a supersuit in a superhero blockbuster movie, then we're dead before we even started. Then it's a low-budget cable channel knockoff. We need the people who make the supersuits, and we need them to do it the same way." So, we got Laura Jean Shannon and her team, who make them, almost exclusively. Each suit takes six to eight months to make. So, we had to cast all the superheroes long before we cast The Boys, because we needed that six-to-eight-month lead time, because they're molded specifically to their bodies. The great Michael Ground joined the team later as a costume designer and made huge contributions to the look and style of the show.

"THE LEVEL OF CARE AND DETAIL THEY PUT INTO THOSE SUITS IS JUST ASTOUNDING."

Eric Kripke

Laura Jean "L.J." Shannon *(specialty costume designer)* Kripke is famously known for saying I was the first person that he hired, which warms my heart. He reached out to me in the really early days to talk about the superhero costumes, since it's something that is a specialty of mine and was sort of a new chapter in his insanely prolific worlds that he had built. Carrie Grace was my assistant costume designer for the superheroes at that time, and then she ended up designing the pilot and the second episode as well.

Jeff Mossa *(production designer)* The supersuits are all based out of L.A., and a lot of that work is done way in advance, which is unique for me. I'm usually ahead of everybody, but in *The Boys*, the supersuits are ahead of everybody. For that process, it's really me just calling them and saying, "Hey, can I get a look at what you guys are comfortable showing me, so I know what this character is going to look like?" So that when I put them in an environment, if the character is going to be all green, for instance, I don't want my walls to be all green. It's that simple.

Shannon It starts with a conversation with Eric Kripke and me. And it's really about a deep dive into the character. It has to be about character development, because really, all characters, whether they're supersuited or otherwise dressed, everything starts with how they present themselves and why they present themselves that way. And we usually have these conversations really early on, oftentimes before the writers' room has even gotten together. They give us a little bit of extra time so that we can really develop these suits in a fashion that we're able to bring this elevated aesthetic to them and bring a cinematic scope to them, as opposed to working on the timeline that a costume designer has given for the rest of the show. That's part of why they made me an associate producer, and I worked with other costume designers on Seasons 3, 4 and 5, particularly Michael Ground.

Kripke The level of care and detail they put into those suits is just astounding. L.J. will put in front of me 20, 25, variations of each character's supersuit. And we'll go, "Oh, I like the shoulder from this, and I like the pants from this, and I like the top from that." And we'll just start playing and then keep doing rounds, and it's just a dialogue.

Shannon Michael Ground is our costume designer. I adore him. He's my brother from another mother, and he was that pearl in the oyster I had been looking for to be the perfect fit for the show.

Moriarty Everyone in our crew that we've worked with, many of them from the very beginning, are as integral to our work family as anyone else is. I think about Michael Ground, who always designs these brilliant costumes. I think about set design. I think about every piece of our production that goes into creating any of our sequences that turn out so brilliantly. It's just on a daily basis due to these brilliant key players and our crew.

Sarah Jeanne Mgeni *(associate supersuits costume designer)* I jumped in for Season 3. I was already assistant costume designing L.J.'s other shows that we had been working on at that point and had come from a build background, so to also help her with this epic show is a special treat for me. For every character, we have a different kind of design philosophy. They all have their own visual voice, while being a part of a whole, which is that our show has the gravitas and the grounded approach that this is a legitimate superhero universe set in the real world. It's not fantastical. And yet we needed to find these really cool, innovative ways to bring each of these characters to life and have them feel cinematic and real to our audience.

Valorie Curry *(actor, Firecracker)* They can come up with solutions at the drop of a hat, even though everyone's exhausted. I think about the nursing scene. I had to unzip my top, and I remember saying to people, "You know, we're obviously not showing anything, but from what you can see, my suit consists of quite a bit of padding. How do you want everything to stay the way that everything is supposed to be when that's unzipped?" And in about 24 hours, the costume department, along with the intimacy coordinator, was able to create a whole corset structure. They made it by hand. It was based on fencing guards that women wear and this sort of hard plastic but cinched in the back, because you needed to be able to not see in the front and for everything to be supported and look real and high. And they put it together in, like, 24 hours on a weekend. They were unbelievable at problem solving. They're just so good at what they do.

Stephan Fleet *(visual effects supervisor)* I was doing Eric Kripke's previous show, *Timeless*, and he hinted at *The Boys* as an opportunity. I had read the comic books when I was in college, so I knew what it was right away, and I wanted in. You read the comic book, and you think it's going to be bloody and gory, which it is. I'm not going to say I'm the Eric whisperer for visual effects, or anything like that, but I think I got a pretty good 75 to 80% batting average of anticipating some of the things he's going to want from visual effects now. Which is really helpful, because it allows me to do bigger and more complicated things faster within

our schedule, because I can shortcut to knowing what he's going to want. But Eric is a also a very collaborative person. So, one of the best things about working on this show is that he is also very willing to listen. He takes the creative ideas from anyone who pitches them.

Kripke I'm definitely not one of those people who would ever say, "We don't even do VFX!" First, it's not true, and second, my VFX supervisors would murder me if I did! In Season 5, for example, I think we have right around 1,400 shots over the eight episodes of VFX — anything from fixing small little cracks and faults and mistakes that production inevitably makes, to creating an entire character like Ambrosius the octopus, for example. Their ability to make this stuff look real is impressive.

Fleet I want to give a shout out to Arv Greywal, who passed away. He was our production designer for Season 2, and the last phone call I ever had with him was right before Season 3. If you watch the show and you see the Flatiron Building in Seasons 3 and 4, you'll see that it says "Greywal and Co." on the glass. That's a tribute to him.

Mossa They pushed shooting [Season 3] back a little bit. So, it was around that point that my agent called me and said that they would be interested in interviewing me. I was a fan of the show, and they explained to me the circumstances. I could feel that they were traumatized. And I could feel how thoughtful Eric and Phil [executive producer Philip Sgriccia] and [executive producer] Michaela [Starr] and everybody was about trying to get this right, because they already had an art department up and running, some of whom had already been on the show in previous seasons. I wanted to assure them that I didn't feel the need, although I was excited about the opportunity, to make my own stamp on anything. If they were happy with what Arv was doing, then I was going to honor that as best as I could.

Michaela Starr *(executive producer)* One of Koy's most iconic fights was between Butcher, Annie, A-Train, Mother's Milk, The Deep and Black Noir, in the Flatiron Building. In the most satisfying and diabolical way, they destroyed the final set designed by our late, great production designer, Arv Greywal — and Arv would've been proud.

Fleet Working with Jeff has been absolutely wonderful. It starts with building this set that, when you walk into it, makes you feel like we're doing something real. And I'm not that guy to say, "Do that thing real!" and the whole real-versus-visual effects argument. I'm not here for that. I'm just saying that whatever you're doing, whatever techniques you're using, you want everything to just feel right, to feel good. He brought that for us, and he would fight to make the best possible sets he could make, or say [when] it had to be on location."

Mossa In terms of the other departments — visual effects, special effects — it's constantly going back and forth with those guys. And I see those guys all the time. I run into them during the day. So, there's a constant dialogue with what we're doing.

Minifie The number-one most shocking moment to me is Termite [played by Brett Geddes] walking into his boyfriend's dick and then exploding his lower half. I remember reading that, while I was on set for a small movie. I was upstairs, and I was told to be very quiet, and I yelped.

Mossa Everybody was talking about the [blown-up] whale in Season 2 and how this was the next-level step up from that. It was one of those ones that was largely already conceptualized.

And it's not like you have to design a penis. But there's plenty of discussions about, you know, the color and, "Is it circumcised?" A lot of that happened before I got there so, for me, that set was figuring out how we were going to execute it and see it through to production. The other interesting thing right off the bat was the dollhouse set, which also coincided with that scene. Again, Arv had done quite a bit conceptually on that, so it was really just seeing it through. But it was definitely a very interesting introduction into that world!

Fleet I'm the guy that figured out the math for how to shrink him down. It was some hardcore, intense planning and previs and math. I really helped design the way we were going to shoot that so that it looked real. Because I'm really picky and anal when it comes to how things are filmed and lighting with visual effects. I wanted to make sure when he shrunk down that it didn't look like some cheap, simple gag. In this day and age, I think audiences are very sophisticated.

Fukuhara The most physical squirm came from the Termite scene. I am not a man, so I don't know, but imagining that was... It sounds painful! I visited the set when they were not filming the day before. I saw Phil [Sgriccia], who was directing the episode, and he was in front of the gigantic penis. And just talking about the logistics of, "Oh, we're going to have to put some lube on him, and he's going to have to somehow jump in." I was just observing how it all happens. I still can't believe that we do the shit that we do — and how serious the conversation gets in the meetings, because we have to actually get it right. But, when you're viewing it as an audience member, you're just kind of like, "Wow, that's hilarious." And that's that.

Kripke When Termite climbs into that guy's penis, we're building this 11-foot-high penis. It's so insane to even contemplate. And then you start talking about, "Okay, how does he jump up into the slit in the head? What does the urethra look like? Where's he going?" All the questions that you have to ask to put something up on its feet when what

you're putting up on its feet is the most insane thing you can think of, and is just ridiculous amounts of fun. It's every bit as much fun as you think it was.

Fleet A year later, I went to a drag show in Toronto, and the drag queens were like, "Has anyone seen that show where the guy shrinks down and crawls into another man's penis?" I was like, "Yeah, I helped design that sequence!" I got applause at this drag show. And I realized we created something unprecedented. Name anything anywhere else where a man shrinks down, crawls into another man's penis, and blows him up from the inside. You can't do it.

DIABOLICAL LEGACY

Kripke I always embraced *The Boys* from the beginning as this dream come true. I was elated to finally get on that playground.

Moriarty When I got to Toronto and started filming, I was like, "Is this still even real?" I'd never been cast in anything. I think back on it now as this ephemeral moment where I had no idea what the show was going to be, even in the capacity of meeting some of my best friends in the universe.

Capone I remember coming to the set very nervous. And then [Urban] was sitting there with his boots on. We introduced ourselves. And then slowly but surely, the other members of The Boys came in. It felt like we were a band playing music, rehearsing, trying to understand: "What is this crazy world we're dealing with."

Crawford It was so wild. We were having the best times of our lives. But we were still like, "I don't know if this is working."

Moriarty I thought filming Season 1 was magic. It was like this alchemy of our crew and my coworkers committed to becoming the best version of what this show could be. The thought of it not going further really broke my heart. I wouldn't let myself project into the future, so I made myself become present with it.

Kripke My recollection of filming Season 1 was that everyone was really, really nervous. Except me. I was nervous about budget.

Capone We didn't know what to expect for the final product. Like, "What are we doing here?" Because as the show progressed, it's like we were making two different TV shows. To see it all for the first time coming together was really an amazing feeling.

Urban I learned a long time ago that it's dangerous to have expectations. I wouldn't say I had expectations for this show. But I certainly had hopes. I hoped it would connect. I hoped it would find an audience.

Usher I don't think I've ever joined a show with expectations of, "This is going to be good." I just want to do my best. And I hope my performance is honest, and I do the character justice. Once my job is done, it's done.

"*THE BOYS* WAS, AND IS, THE MOST PERSONAL THING I'VE EVER WRITTEN, IN THAT I COULD CHANNEL MY UNCUT, UNADULTERATED SENSIBILITIES. THIS IS WHAT I FIND FUNNY, WHAT I FIND HORRIFIC, WHAT I FIND MOVING."

Eric Kripke

Crovetti Only the trailer for the first season was out when I got cast for Season 2. Definitely a part of me was like, "Oh, I feel like this show could be really big."

Quaid I didn't know how the show was going to be perceived. I knew that I liked it. I knew that we were very bloody and a little political. I knew it was a satire. But, like, is everybody's mom going to be cool with this? But to my surprise, I wasn't giving people enough credit.

Chou It was nice to write for a show that people watch. We were all very grateful that people were responding to the material.

Monahan I think there was something for everyone. I always grew up loving family dramas, and what I realized is *The Boys* is a family drama. It's about a found family. And the relationships between the characters are so amazing. And the actors brought these characters to life in such a lovable way that connected with the audience.

Neira There's something very universal about a group of characters who are so clearly the underdogs.

Richardson I think people were telling other people, "You've got to see this." There was something here beyond the gore and the dick jokes.

Kripke I'm surprised when anything I do takes off. Show me a writer who likes their own work, and I'll show you a bad writer. So, it was absolutely shocking. One thing I can say — it was definitely the most gratifying response I've ever gotten, because *The Boys* was, and is, the most personal thing I've ever written, in that I could channel my uncut, unadulterated sensibilities. This is what I find funny, what I find horrific, what I find moving.

Urban We were greenlit for a second season, and it slowly dawns on you that the show is a hit. Not just by the ratings, but by the fact that suddenly, in your day-to-day life, people are coming up to you and saying, "Hey, I love your show."

Fukuhara I think the moment I realized how big it was was when Barack Obama included it on his TV recommendations list for 2020 [after Season 2]. I think if the president signs off on it, we're doing a good job.

Crovetti I was like, "What? Obama watches the show? This is insane."

Kripke I was blown away. I pictured him and Michelle watching a guy shrinking down and climbing into another guy's penis. Like, what was their reaction on the couch?

Goldberg I still couldn't believe I was watching that scene!

Kripke I think there are a bunch of celebrities that watch the show. Snoop Dogg is a fan. He brought me out to his complex in Inglewood, and we talked about it. It was super dope.

Alonso [Before] Season 1, we went down to San Diego for Comic-Con, and Amazon plastered that city with all our iconography. Butcher's face was on a skyscraper. We were the biggest show in town if you just looked around. But [it hadn't premiered yet, so] nobody knew who we were! We were trying to entice people to come to our panel. By Season 4, we were packing Hall H, which is like 7,000 people. It was standing room only.

Minifie I was hiking in the Grand Canyon. It was 27 miles. It took 12 hours. And at the bottom, somebody went, "That's Ashley from *The Boys*." I was like, "This is crazy!" I came from theater, where the biggest audience we had was 55 people.

Moriarty A woman at a convention in Manchester, England, wrote me the most beautiful letter about how my character has been an inspiration to her.

Starr I've been memed by a lot of young people, and I am proud of Homelander's memes. There are elements of the show, if not the entire show, that are really firmly in this collective pop-culture consciousness. It's so great and indicative of how the show has really gotten into people's living rooms and minds.

Crawford The TSA guys really love it. I see it when I'm going through the airport, and they give me the double look. They don't even know my name. It's always like, "The Deep!"

Fleet I never thought I'd work for a show where I could go to a Spirit Halloween and see the costumes. People just love it.

Goldberg I didn't think this many people were down for satire to this degree. I'm thrilled to see this is the case. And we were ahead of the curve.

Urban I think people are drawn into the show for the shock and awe and the graphic nature and to see something you're not going to see on any other television show. But what makes them stay are the characters. People enjoy spending time with them. I've always liked that my character has the ability to talk anybody into doing anything. And if he can't talk them into it, he will threaten them with all sorts of preposterous outcomes.

Fukuhara The show is called *The Boys*, but I think a lot of strength comes from the women on the show. We see Victoria Neuman going through what it takes to be a superhero, but also as a mother. Erin's character is always trying to do the right thing. Kimiko is trying to do the right thing, even with a dark past.

Kripke People have always said to me, "Oh, it's such a cynical show." But I've always thought it's really hopeful and emotional. It's just that the heroes, The Boys, are fighting. They're fighting so hard to make the world a better place, despite all their imperfections and flaws and humanity.

Goldberg *The Boys* has aged well over time. It hit the zeitgeist because we made a show, and then elements started to happen in real life. And as history looks back, I imagine the show, will seem even smarter. And people will be like, "Wow, these guys really figured it out."

"AT THE START OF EVERY SEASON, ERIC WOULD ASK US, *WHAT ARE YOU PISSED OFF ABOUT, AND WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?* THAT GENERATED SO MANY OF OUR STORIES"

Judalina Neira

Neira At the start of every season, Eric would ask us, "What are you pissed off about, and what are you afraid of?" That generated so many of our stories. Hopefully, in the end, we showed that you can take down the assholes and survive.

Kripke The one thing I found so personally meaningful and therapeutic about the show was that the writers and I had a place to put our anger and shock and frustration. And we don't have it anymore. It's been a bummer, and it's the thing I've been struggling with the most. Now I'm internalizing it.

Moriarty We showed how the superhero genre can be an opportunity for social commentary and satire. I hope that more shows and movies do that, because *The Boys* is a testament that we have an appetite for it.

Starr You start a show, and you never know what's going to happen. You have no idea what you're getting into. All you do is sign a contract for five-to-six seasons. But this has been the most incredible experience of my career thus far. I've grown so much as a man and a person and as a creative from being part of this group.

Usher To cross the finish line together is very emotional. It was hard for me to walk off the set. This was such a personal, intimate group of people that we've been able to reach this accomplishment with.

Fukahara I hold these experiences dear to my heart. I miss the crew so much already, and I can't wait to go back to Toronto.

Moriarity I know the universe is continuing to expand. But a piece of Annie will always be with me.

Quaid The show inhabits a very specific Venn diagram, which is an amazing snapshot of what America was like in the years that the show was out.

Alonso It told the truth. It called out all the crap that we see day in and day out. And we disrupted the genre to the point where people started holding the genre accountable because of the standard we set. That's pretty substantial.

Crovetti If the show made viewers laugh or cringe or just feel something real, we did our jobs.

Minifie I want people to remember *The Boys* as a really honest, wild ride. We were able to talk about some really complex stuff about politics and the entertainment industry.

Crawford It will be fun to see how the show lives on. Even though it's over, hopefully people will keep finding it.

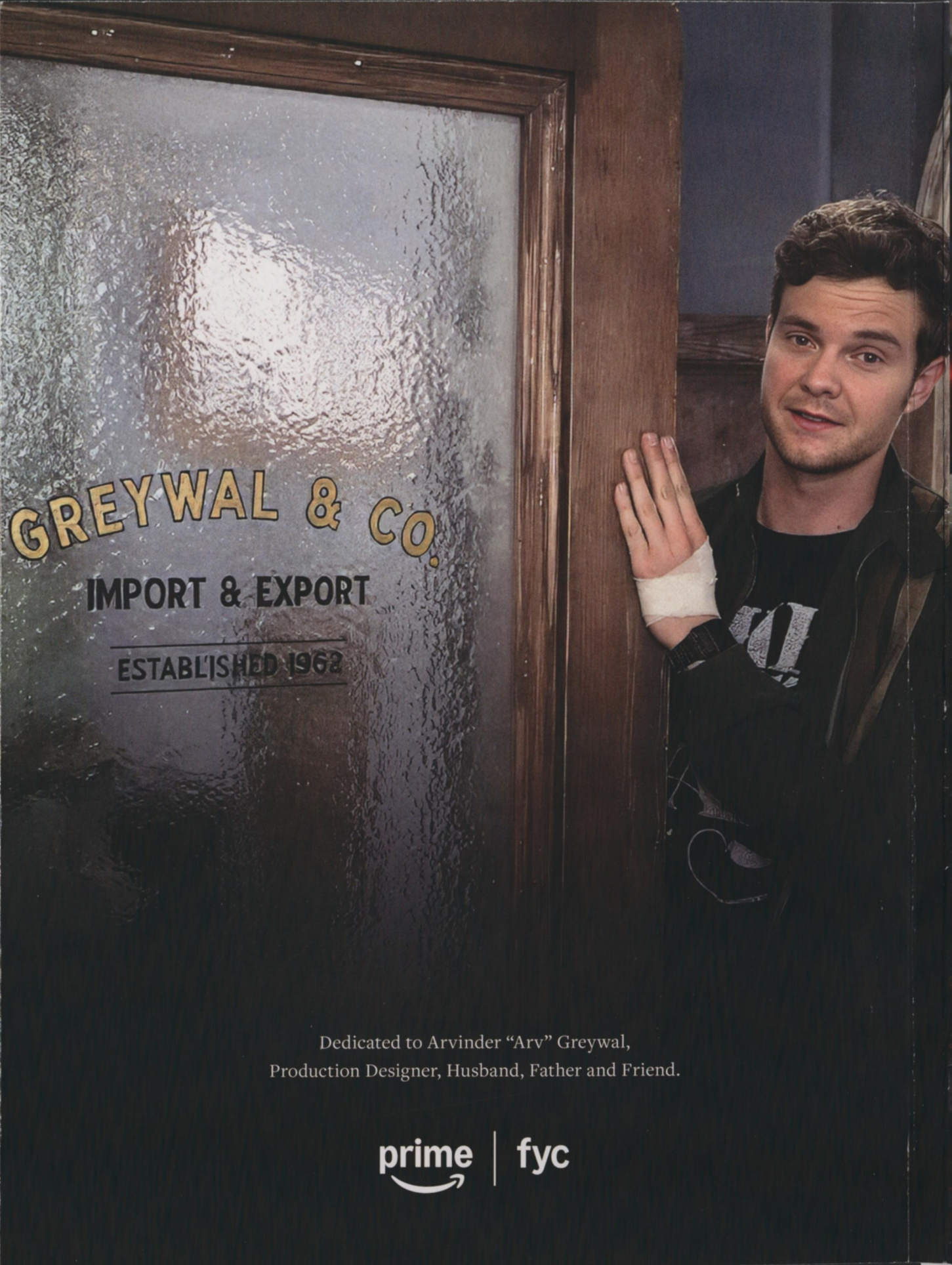
Claudia Doumit *(actor, Victoria Neuman)* I think the show has been necessary for its time. I think that's why people love it.

Urban *The Boys* can be enjoyed and rewatched over and over. And I hope that people will continue to do so long after Season 5 drops. And I hope they remember it as an entertaining, fun, action-packed, batshit crazy ride.

Capone So many things have changed in the world since we started. Who knows if the world will be a better place now, but *The Boys* will be there forever and ever.

Crawford Maybe there will be a movie one day. It would be great as an actor to revisit it.

Kripke I don't know how people are going to respond to the show in 10 years. But what I can say is, everything is so fucking scary and stupid at the same time. To put a show out there that says to people, "We get how you're feeling" — it's healthy that people could watch a show and have their fears and feelings acknowledged and not feel alone. So, if we can all come together, we can start figuring out solutions.



Dedicated to Arvinder "Arv" Greywal,
Production Designer, Husband, Father and Friend.

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